

A Fawcett Publication

Bob Steele

WESTERN

DEC.

10¢

NO. 1

Introducing Fighting

BOB STEELE

FILMDOM'S FASTEST
SHOOTING COWBOY
HERO IN HIS OWN
MAGAZINE OF
WESTERN THRILLS!



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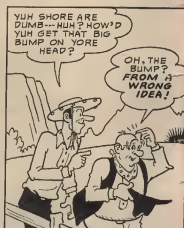
FILMDOM'S FASTEST
SHOOTING COWBOY
HERO IN HIS OWN
MAGAZINE OF
WESTERN THRILLS!

Give

enough!

DIMWIT DIDDLE

**GETS
BUMPED!**



BOB STEELE WESTERN

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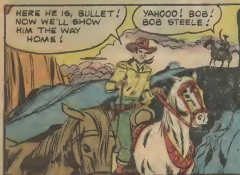
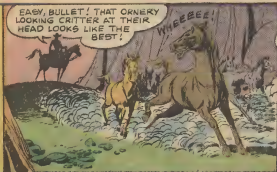
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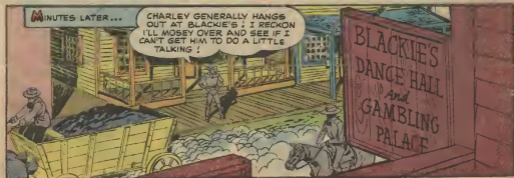
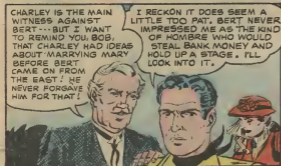
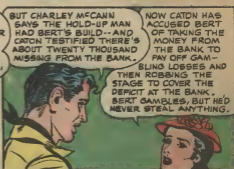
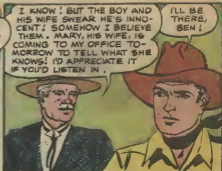
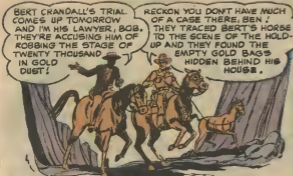


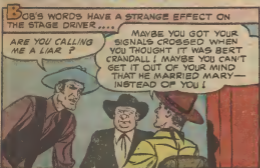
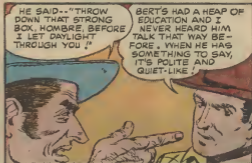
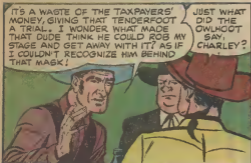
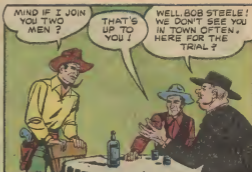
Bob Steele has helped lawyer Ben Howland solve many a case by using his daring courage and blazing six-guns! But when he tries to rip down what appeared to be an open and shut case against an innocent man, Bob found that it would take more than straight shooting and battering fists to walk across the danger line that marked him for —

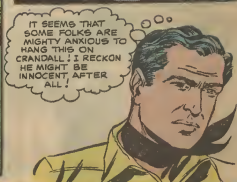
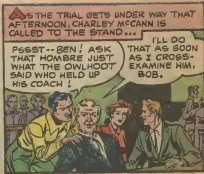
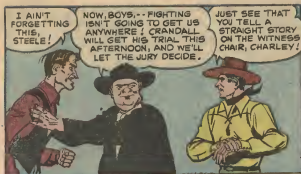
HANGMAN'S BAIT!

Bob Steele
AND HIS
MIGHTY
STALLION,
BULLET,
PREPARE TO
CAPTURE A
WILD
MUSTANG
FOR BOB'S
HORSE
RANCH...



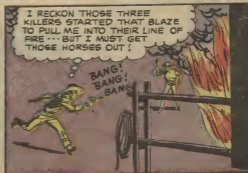
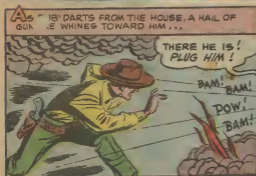
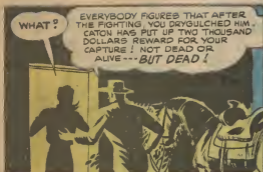


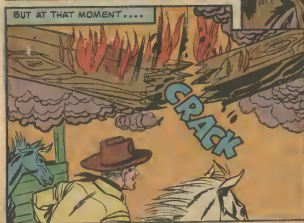
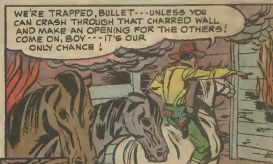
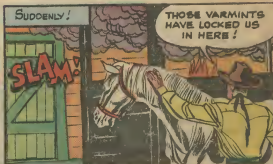
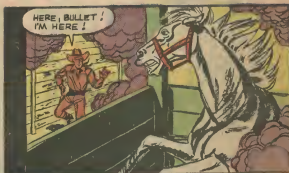
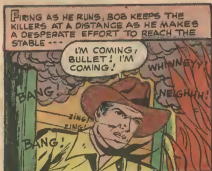












IS *Bob Steele* FATED TO PERISH IN THE BLAZING INFERNO? WHAT CAN HE POSSIBLY DO TO AVERT THE GRIM REAPER, WHO HAS HIM TAGGED FOR A HORRIBLE DEATH! READ CHAPTER II OF *HANGMAN'S BAIT!*

FOOL'S GOLD

By Eando Binder



"LOP EARS," said Dusty Jones, in a firm voice. "I'm a-going to strike gold this time for sure. Yes sir, I just have a hunch this trip is it, over into the Painted Hills. Mark my words, Lop Ears. We're goin' to strike it rich!"

Lop Ears didn't pay much attention as they both jogged along the rough trail toward the Painted Hills. Dusty Jones, an old weather-beaten prospector, had been saying that same thing on and off for some twenty years. Each prospecting trip was always going to be the one. And each invariably turned out to be a wasted jaunt.

No, Lop Ears didn't pay much attention to such foolishly optimistic words. Lop Ears was a donkey, and he only understood two words—"Giddap!" and "Whoa!" And half the time he pretended not to understand "Giddap" either.

With Lop Ears packed up for the trek, Dusty Jones led the way through the winding arroyos and gulches to the foothills and then into the rugged wilderness of the Painted Hills. The hills, in the bright sunlight, struck off shafts of many glorious colors—red, blue, green, purple, gold.

Did that golden color reflect from strata of gold-bearing quartz? "Why not?" Dusty Jones thought aloud, as was his habit during the long, lonely stretches through the silent hills. "Why couldn't there be a whopping big vein of gold up thar, just a-waiting for me to stumble onto? It stands to reason that gold makes the golden glow!"

But a week later, Dusty was a mite discouraged. His pick bit into likely-looking quartz and his eager hand dipped into sandy streams time after time, but nary a speck of gold.

Suddenly Lop Ears' drooping ears shot up straight at a piercing yell from his master. "Gold!" Dusty screeched like a maniac, running toward a strata of eroded rock that glinted with a gleaming yellow hue. "Gold!" he yelled again, picking up lumps of yellow ore.

But then his voice died to a cracked whisper

of dismay.

"Fool's gold!" he groaned.

Dusty moaned. The lode of pyrites ran along for dozens of feet, in a tawny streak. If it had been gold, it would have been the biggest strike of many years.

"But it's only fool's gold," croaked Dusty. "And I'm a fool for figuring I'd ever strike it rich. I'm a fool, Lop Ears. Let's get out before I go mad."

The weary little man and plodding burro turned back through the hills, but it was only a mile beyond that Dusty jerked to attention, seeing another golden gleam from the bed of a shallow stream they were crossing. "Fool's gold," muttered Dusty, reaching underwater. But again the burro's ears shot up and quivered as another shriek tore the air.

"Gold! Real gold this time!" And Dusty Jones was dancing around crazily, as if with sunstroke. But it wasn't sunstroke. An hour's panning proved that. Besides a few large-sized nuggets, there was a wealth of gold dust all around him, a vein following the burbling stream.

It was a bonanza!

Three days later, Dusty happily slapped his burro's haunches as they wound their way toward Sagebrush Junction. Dusty had panned enough for an assay and expenses, and would now stake his claim in town. In a short time, he would be rich with his gold find.

"Lop Ears," he promised. "I'm going to buy you a gold-studded harness and a silver bucket to eat your grain out of. Nothing but the best for us from now on. We're rich."

"Is that so?" spoke up a laconic voice to the side.

Dusty whirled and choked. Two men sat on horses there, grinning at him. Dusty recognized them both—Jod Jackson and Squint Peters, men with an unsavory reputation as horse-thieves, cattle-rustlers, and claim-jumpers. And they were both pointing guns at him, giving Dusty no chance to go for his rifle



slung on the burro's pack.

They dismounted and strolled over. "What you got in those sacks, Dusty?" Jackson drawled, reaching for the two leather bags of gold dust.

"N-nothing," Dusty choked. "Just some—uh—jerked beef."

"Don't try to fool us," Jackson barked. "We followed you a ways and heard you talking out loud about your gold. Thanks."

Dusty clutched wildly for the bags, but Jackson raised his gun-butt and clipped him on the head. Dusty went down and out in the dirt. The two men left with the gold-sacks.

After they had galloped off a short distance, Squint Peters spoke up. "Say, Jod, why didn't we jump his claim? These sacks only hold a couple thousand dollars. We should've threatened the old galoot and made him tell where he struck it."

"Squint, you're plumb stupid at times," Jackson returned scornfully. "Threatening him wouldn't have worked. After an old prospector like that has made his big strike, wild horses couldn't drag his secret out of him. So we'd have to shoot him dead and then where would we be? Toss the sacks down now, in those bushes."

"Huh?" said Squint, obeying in bewilderment. "Why are we turning back now?"

"Idiot!" snapped Jackson. "Because now we're going to follow Dusty Jones. He has to go back to his claim now, to get some more gold for the assay and claim. He thinks we just pulled a plain robbery and then high-tailed. He won't know now that we purposely did that so's he would lead us back to his strike!"

And that was exactly what Dusty Jones was forced to do now—after he staggered up from the attack. "Varmints!" he murmured. "Now I got to go back to the claim for more gold. Come on, Lop Ears."

It was sundown when Dusty reached the spot. Suddenly in the still evening air he heard a pebble clink. Only a tiny sound, but it told a story to the wise old man.

"What a fool I was, Lop Ears," he moaned in a low voice. "Jackson and Peters laid a neat trap. Stole my gold so I'd return for more. They followed me. They'll kill me now and take the claim over."

Deep shadows had fallen. Dusty drew a shaking breath of temporary relief. "At Least

night is coming fast. They won't try to get me in the dark. They'll wait till dawn. I could sneak away during the night and save my life. But than that would leave them two coyotas free to take over my claim!"

But after deep darkness had thrown its protective mantle over the scene, Dusty jumped up, with a glimmer of hope in his eyes. "Come on, Lop Ears," he whispered. "You and me are making a quick trip."

Dusty and his burro were back before dawn. Dusty worked hurriedly, fumbling in the darkness, but finished as the first red streaks blazed behind the Painted Hills.

In the full glow of dawn, Dusty began swinging his pick lustily, chipping off quartzite rock near the stream which held his bonanza of gold. As he worked he talked aloud. "Gold! Lots of gold! Millions of dollars! It didn't matter that those two owlhoots stole the sacks. I got enough gold here to fill a hundred sacks! Ha, ha, ha!"

Stealthy footsteps sounded behind him. Jod Jackson and Squint Peters came up, eyeing the small heap of yellow chunks behind Dusty. Jod knelt and picked up some lumps eagerly. But then his face fell and curses streamed from his lips as he picked up more lumps and flung them down angrily.

"**F**OOL'S gold!" he grated in harsh disappointment. "That loco old guy just *thinks* he discovered gold. Listen to him laugh. He went crazy. He's digging fool's gold like mad. That means even the two sacks we stole and cached are the same junk. Let's go on to Rimrock. Squint!"

When their mounted figures had vanished in the distance, Dusty Jones hugged Lop Ears happily.

"Sure it's fool's gold piled here," he said. "Last night you and I brought a load of it back, from that lode we first found. I dumped it here to make it look like I was only digging up this junk. The *real* gold is in the river bed, safe and sound! Yes sir, Lop Ears, that fool's gold sure fooled those two fools!"

Dusty felt better later when he learned the outlaws were jailed for another robbery that was less successful than the one they had tried on him.

THE END

Bob Steele

in HANGMAN'S BAIT!

CHAPTER TWO THE TRIGGER TRAP!



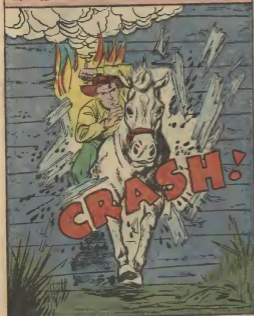
WITH SPLIT-SECOND
TIMING, BOB SPURS
BULLET FORWARD..

WHEW! THAT WAS
TOO CLOSE FOR
COMFORT!

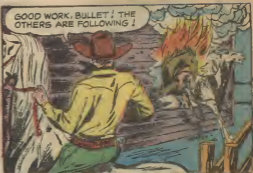
IT'S UP TO YOU NOW, BULLET!
YOU'VE GOT TO CRASH
THROUGH THAT WALL--
OR ELSE!



BOB SPURS HIS FAITHFUL MOUNT, WHO UNHESITATINGLY LUNGES TOWARD THE CHARRED WALL, AND..



GOOD WORK, BULLET! THE OTHERS ARE FOLLOWING!



WE WEREN'T A MINUTE TOO SOON! THE HORSES ARE SAFE --- EVEN IF THAT BARN IS FINISHED!



I RECKON THOSE KILLERS HIGH-TAILED OUT OF HERE FIGURING THEY'LL FIND MY CARCASS UNDER THAT BURNING BARN! -- THE HORSES WILL BE SAFE IN THE CORRAL, BULLET! YOU AND I ARE GETTING AWAY FROM HERE!

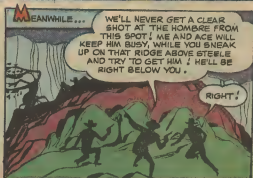
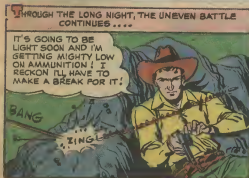
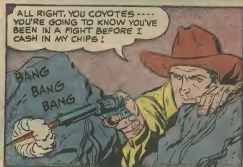
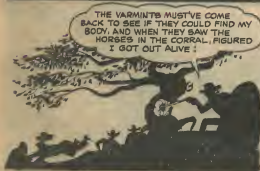
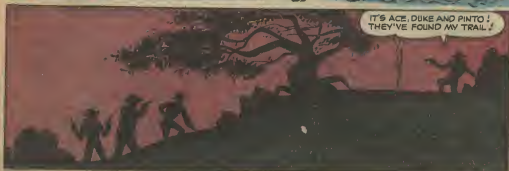


I NEED TIME TO PLAN MY NEXT MOVE! DIG DIRT, BULLET! WE'RE HEADING FOR THE HILLS!



I GUESS THE SAME HOMBRE WHO HELD UP THAT STAGE AND FRAMED BERT CRANDALL, ALSO GUNNED CHARLEY--- KNOWING I'D BE BLAMED FOR IT AFTER OUR RUCKUS! CATON HIMSELF MAY BE BEHIND THIS, OR HE WOULDN'T BE SO ANXIOUS TO GET ME OUT OF THE WAY PERMANENTLY!





UNAWARE OF THE DANGER LURKING ABOVE HIM, BOB TAKES INVENTORY OF HIS AMMUNITION



SUDDENLY!

MY SHOULDER!



IT'S TIME FOR ME TO CLEAR OUT OF HERE! HERE, BULLET!



DUKE! ACE! HE'S VAMPOOSING! GET THE HORSES!

WE'RE PULLING UP STAKES, BULLET! I RECKON I NEED A DOCTOR!

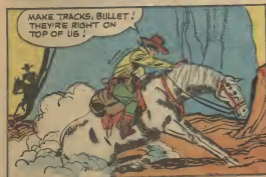


RUN FOR IT, BULLET!





AS IF SENSING THE DESPERATE PLIGHT OF HIS MASTER, BULLET DROPS TO ALLOW BOB TO REACH THE SADDLE...



AS THE CHASE WINDS IN AND OUT OF THE HILLS, BOB FIGHTS TO RETAIN CONSCIOUSNESS ---



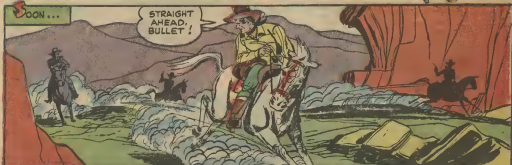
STEELE'S HORSE IS HEADING FOR THE CHASM! SPLIT UP AND WE CAN DRIVE HIM IN THAT DIRECTION; THEN WE'LL HAVE HIM TRAPPED!

RIGHT! HE'LL NEVER GET ACROSS THAT CHASM!



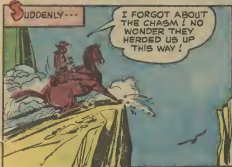
SOON...

STRAIGHT AHEAD, BULLET!



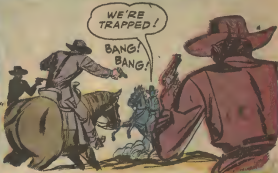
SUDDENLY---

I FORGOT ABOUT THE CHASM! NO WONDER THEY HERDED US UP THIS WAY!



WE'RE TRAPPED!

BANG! BANG!



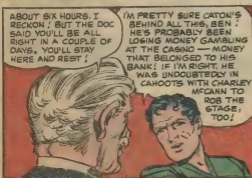
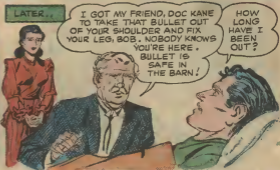
UNLESS YOU CAN MAKE THAT JUMP, BULLET-- WE'RE DONE FOR! COME ON!



BANG! BANG!

HE'LL NEVER MAKE IT!





A WEEK LATER...

THEY'RE--SOB--
--TAKING
BERT TO
THE STATE
PENITENTIARY
TOMORROW
--SOB--!

THEN THERE'S NO TIME
TO LOSE! WE HAVE TO
SEE BERT TODAY! COME ON,
MARY! I CAN'T EXPOSE MYSELF
YET... SO I WANT YOU TO GET THE
INFORMATION FOR ME!

BE CAREFUL,
BOB! THOSE
KILLERS ARE
STILL ON THE
PROWL FOR
YOU!

MINUTES LATER, AS BOB AND MARY CAUTIOUSLY
APPROACH THE REAR OF THE JAIL...

WHAT'S
PINTO DOING
IN THERE
WITH A
DEPUTY'S
BADGE?

CATON PUT THE PRESSURE ON THE
SHERIFF TO MAKE HIM A DEPUTY!
CATON'S BEEN BLAMING THE
SHERIFF FOR NEGLECT OF DUTY
BECAUSE YOU HAVEN'T BEEN
CAUGHT!

SO YOU CAME
TO SEE YOUR
HUSBAND BEFORE
THEY TAKE HIM
AWAY TOMORROW,
EH?

THE SHERIFF
GAVE ME
PERMISSION!

MARY!

THERE'S NOT MUCH TIME, BERT... BUT
I HAVE TO KNOW FAST! DON'T ASK
QUESTIONS! JUST TELL ME WHERE
CATON KEEPS THE RECORDS THAT
WOULD SHOW ANY
MISSING MONEY!

HE'D HAVE THEM
IN A PRIVATE SAFE
IN HIS OFFICE!

I HEARD YOU!
JUST WHY ARE
YOU SO NOSEY
ABOUT MR. CATON'S
BANK RECORDS?

YOU ROTTEN
DEVIL! LET
HER GO!

OH!

BUT BOB HAS BEEN WATCHING...

DON'T MOVE,
BOB! I HAVE
YOU COVERED!

UGH!

SORRY TO HAVE TO DO
THIS, BOB! BUT
YOU'LL HAVE YOUR
CHANCE TO PROVE
YOUR INNOCENCE
IN COURT!

TAKE MARY HOME
WILL YOU,
SHERIFF?

THERE AIN'T GOING TO BE ANY
TRIAL FOR YOU, STEELE! DUKE
AND ACE ARE DUE HERE ANY
MINUTE, AND WE AIM TO PLUG
YOU WHERE YOU STAND!

YOU YELLOW
COYOTE! WHAT
MAKES YOU
THINK YOU CAN
GET AWAY WITH
IT?

IF THERE'S ANY
QUESTION, ALL WE
GOT TO SAY IS THAT YOU
TRIED TO ESCAPE! NO
CRIME IN PLUGGING AN
ESCAPED KILLER IS THERE?
THERE AIN'T NO WAY OUT
FOR YOU THIS TIME!

LOCKED IN THE JAIL CELL WITH NOT
EVEN A CHANCE FOR HIS LIFE! WHAT
HOPE IS THERE FOR COURAGEOUS
BOB STEELE? READ CHAPTER III OF
HANGMAN'S BAIT!

PIANIST PETE
FINE ACCOMPANIST



COME INSIDE,
BUCK! I WANT
TUH SHOW YUH
THE NEW PIANO
I BOUGHT!

I DIDN'T KNOW
YOU PLAYED
THE PIANO!



DID YOU KNOW
THAT BEING A
GOOD PIANIST
SAVED MUH LIFE
ONE TIME!

HUH? BEING A
GOOD PIANIST
SAVED YORE
LIFE ONE
TIME?



THAT'S RIGHT! WHEN WE
HAD THE FLOOD TWO
YEARS AGO, MUH WIFE
GOT ON THE TABLE AND
FLOATED DOWN THE
STREAM UNTIL SHE
WUZ RESCUED!

BUT WHAT ABOUT
YUH? YUH SAID
YORE BEING A
GOOD MUSICIAN
SAVED YORE
LIFE!



THAT'S RIGHT---
I ACCOMPANIED
MUH WIFE ON
THE PIANO!



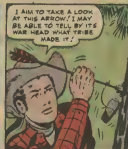
THERE IS ALWAYS ACTION! ADVENTURE! MYSTERY! in...

**MONTE
HALE
WESTERN!**

NOT A SIGN OF THE VARMINT
WHO JUST CUT LOOSE ST
ME WITH THAT ARROW.
THIS IS MIGHTY
STRANGE!



I AIM TO TAKE A LOOK
AT THIS ARROW! I MAY
BE ABLE TO TELL BY ITS
WARR HEAD WHAT TRIBE
MADE IT!



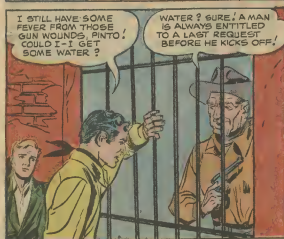
NO INDIAN MADE THIS
ARROW! THAT LITTLE
BLACK COFFIN WITH MY
NAME ON IT! THIS IS
THE CALLING CARD OF
THE GRAVEDIGGER!



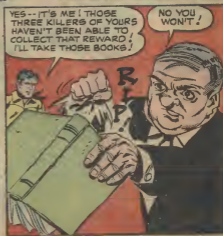
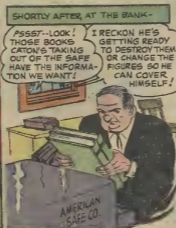
10¢ BUY IT EVERY MONTH AT YOUR FAVORITE NEWSSTAND! 10¢

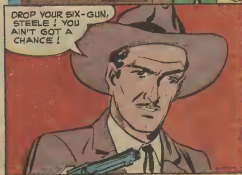
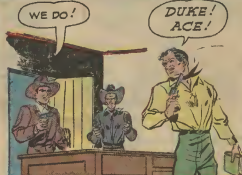
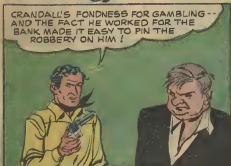
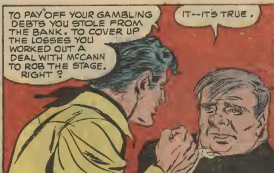
Bob Steele in HANGMAN'S BAIT

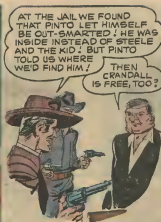
CHAPTER THREE
GUNS AND GRIT

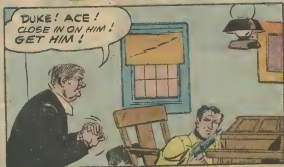
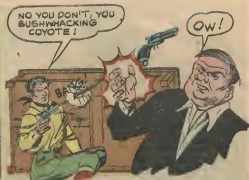


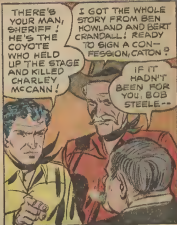


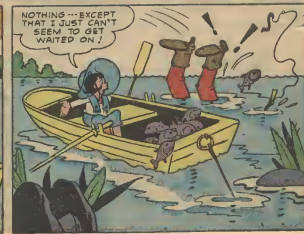
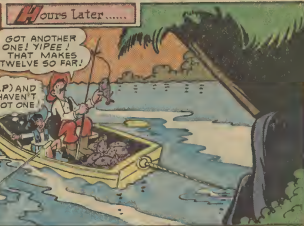
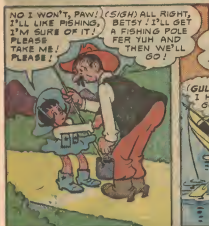




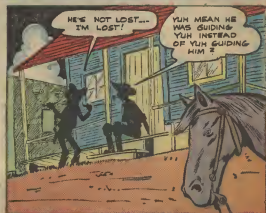
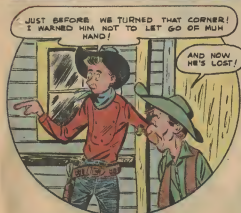
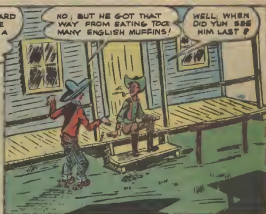
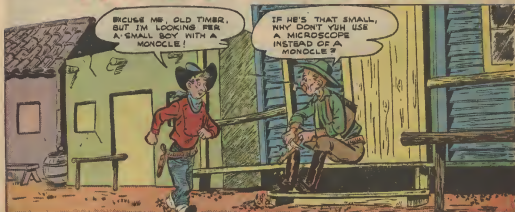




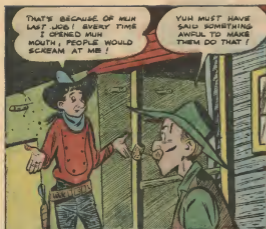




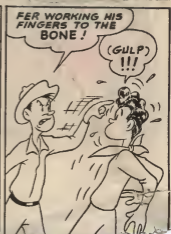
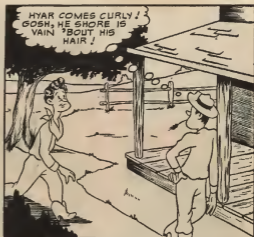
FIZZY in "LOST"













BOB STEELE

**THE ROUGHEST,
TOUGHEST
COWBOY
OF THEM ALL!**